

Message Text

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SUBJECT: FRAGA'S FIRST MAJOR DOMESTIC SPEECH ON GOVT'S REFORM PLANS
AND OTHER FRAGA STATEMENTS

1. FRAGA, IN FIRST MAJOR GOVT ADDRESS SINCE
ARIAS' SPEECH TO THE CORTES, ADDRESSED FEB 3 SOME 2,000 MEMBERS
AND GUESTS OF THE PRESTIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENT "CLUB SIGLO XXI"
THE ADDRESS CENTERED ON THE INEVITABILITY OF CHANGE IN SPAIN'S
MODERN SOCIETY. THE CHANGE IN THE CHIEF OF STATE COINCIDED WITH
THE CONSEQUENT TRANSITION TO A "NEW LEGITIMACY", A SERIOUS
CHANGE IN THE ECONOMIC SITUATION, AND THE END OF COLONIZATION,
HE SAID. THE MOST PRUDENT MANNER OF MEETING THE CHALLENGE IS
THROUGH "REAL CHANGES, ESTABLISHED GRADUALLY AND BY CONSENSUS,"
UNDER THE CLEAR LEADERSHIP OF RECOGNIZED AND ACCEPTED GROUPS
WITH SUFFICIENT AUTHORITY." REFORM FROM ABOVE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED
BY A PROCESS OF DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION FROM BELOW. THIS
CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED BY THE PARTICIPATION OF THE MAJORITY
THROUGH "FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND UNIVERSAL SUGGRAGE."

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2. IN AN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED MONDAY IN THE FRENCH PAPER "SUD-QUEST", FRAGA CONTIUED HIS PRACTICE OF EXPLAINING REFORM INTENTIONS IN INTERVIEWS WITH THE FOREIGN PRESS. HE LISTED THE MOST ESSENTIAL REFORMS, IN ORDER, AS A NEW STATUTE OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS, REFORM OF THE ANTI-TERRORIST LAW, ESTABLISHMENT OF A BICAMERAL LEGISLATURE, AND REFORM OF THE ELECTORAL LAW. HE FELT IT WAS INDISPENSABLE TO ESTABLISH ONE CHAMBER TO BE ELECTED BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE. AS A TIMETABLE HE PRESENTED, FIRST, A MODIFICATION OF THE STATUTE OF ASSOCIATIONS AND THEN THE ELECTRAL LAW: SECOND A REFERENDUM ON THE LEGISTLATURE AND ON THE SUCESSION LAW: (NO APPROXIMATE DATE GIVEN FOR THESE FIRST TWO ITEMS) THIRD, MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE (REPORTEDLY SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMEBER) AND, FOURTH, A GENERAL PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION BEFORE THE EXPIRATION OF THE PROROGUED TERM OF THE CORTES, NO LATER THAN JUNE 1977.

3. ON THE POLITICAL MAP OF SPAIN FRAGA IDENTIFIED FOUR FORCES: THE FRANXOISTS, THE LIBERALS AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, THE SOIALISTS, AND THE COMMUNISTS. OF THE "BUNKER" ELEMENT HE SAID THER INFLUENCE ON THE GOVT WAS ONE OF INERTIA. THE CENTER AND THE SOCIALISTS WERE PRESENTLY "ATOMIZED". IN HIS VIEW, IN THE PRESENT START-UP PHASE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS, THE LEGALIZATION OF THE COMMUNISTS, WHO COULD PROVOKE DANGEROUS REACTIONS, WOULD PRESENT TOO MANY RISKS.

4. IN THE SPANISH PRESS THERE HAS BEEN MUCH COMMENT, SOME HUMOROUS, IN BOTH CARTOONS AND EDITORIALS OF FRAGA'S HABIT OF GIVING INTERVIEWS TO THE FOREIGN PRESS. HIS ADDRESS TO CLUB SIGLO WAS HOWEVER, WELL RECEIVED. IN PARTICULAR, "ARRIBA" (NATIONAL) ON ITS FRONT PAGE BILLED FRAGA AS THE "REFORMIST ALTERNATIVE" (TO "RUPTURE"), "THE PROJECTOR OF EVOLUTION WITH IN CONTINUITY." FRAGA'S SPEECHES AND INTERVIEWS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR HAVE MADE HIM THE BEST KNOWN PUBLIC APART FROM THE KING AND ARIAS AND MADE HIM APPEAR AS THE DRIVING FORCE BEHINED POLITICAL REFORM.
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